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BY

G E O R G E W. T H O M P S O N.

A U T H O R O F

“LIVING FORCES,” “DEUS SEMPER,” &c.

W H E E L I N G , W. V A :

J. W. HEISKELL, 22 MONROE STREET.

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From "PHON, an Epic-Drama of Life, Death and Immortality."



CANTO SEVENTH.

I.

Bring cypress and myrtle to crown the Dead—
The dead, the dead, the dead Old Past,
With the dust of ages on him cast,
And the sere leaves of Autumn lately shed ;

Autumnal leaves in dying glory shed,
And turn'd to dust from whence they came,
Or gas to make some future flame,
Or flow'rs, for spring-time, in their early bed.

He died yesterday, and to-day he lies
In death,—and he, to-morrow, dies
'Mid laughing sounds and wailing cries,
And not a soul could live unless he dies.

Bring cypress and myrtle to crown the dead,
For from dying and living come
Wail and laugh and life's busy hum,
The hurrying tramp and the burying tread.

Death moveth onwards, and onward moves life,
Force into Forces is chang'd,
And atoms in order are rang'd,
And Order rules over, or comes out of strife.

Myrtle and cypress, from ashes of life,
And grasses, fruits, flow'rs and grain,
Needs of the poor, wants of the vain,
Come from the fire and the ashes of strife.

II.

Bring wine-cup and ivy to cheer the Heart,
The heart,—the hearts that are sinking,
The head,—the heads that are thinking
Of wearisome days—and would sadly depart;

Depart to the land of shadow and dream,—
Shadow—dream!—*here*, shadow and dream,
For that is the whole which we seem
When the *real* is gone,—shadow and gleam.

Light gleams thro' shadows,—dreams color the life;
Dreams of the day, dreams of the night,
Woven in gloom, woven in light,
And the woof and the warp is love and is strife.

The clank of the shuttle as it crosses the woof,
And pictures with tints of the weft,
Passes left to right, right to left
By pulse of the heart, by thought and behoof.

And this many-color'd web of life is spun
By darken'd deeds, by brighten'd deeds,
By lighten'd eyes, by heart that bleeds,
Until the *mystic life* of Work is done.

Until the *mystic work* of Life is done,—
By Thought is done and web is wove
In pulse of guilt or throbs of love,
In many color'd shades, as light from sun.

And the mystic picture of life is *laid*,
From tints in the thread of life,
By the skill and the work and the strife
Of the mystic Self,—the maker and made.

Maker and made;—there are Forces that give
The Pow'rs which this Maker may use
Other forces to use or abuse,
And fashion and weave the life he may live.

And the picture, with bright tints and with stain
In the web of his life remain,
Stamp'd with the light, stamp'd with the stain,
And he labors in love, or labors in vain.

III.

Bring flow'rs to crown the ghastly skull,—the skull,
Once many-thoughted—wildly daz'd—
In its own light and gloom becraz'd,—
Daz'd and becraz'd,—with its own light too full.

But, now, the Thinker gone, no thought is there;—
No Thought is there,—no love for thought,
From Heart to ashes turn'd, is brought
To give a bliss or cause a future care.

The ashes of the Life are gone,—are gone;
Gone where! Where gone? Gone where they serve
New Sense to make, and newer Nerve
Of th' universal life that hurries on.

The empty skull,—the emptied skull is here ;—
 No thought,—no love,—the *real* gone,—
 Gone with the Life that hurries on,
 And thro' this skull, no more shall think or fear.

Bring flow'rs to crown my life ;—bring wine,—
 Bring ruby wine and woman's smile,
 True or false ;—shadows will beguile
 The passing moment ;—passing shall be mine.

Be mine, be mine ;—snatch'd from th' Eternal Now,
 Shall now, shall *now* be mine, and mine,
 In my divinity divine,
 The passing life with pleasures I endow.

IV.

To-morrow,—to-morrow is the fool of time,
 Which is, and is not, till it come
 With cant of pray'r or roll of drum,
 And all the Rights it brings are link'd with Crime :

Link'd with crime and grimm'd with blood and gain'd
 By indirection and deceit,
 Which all the ages oft repeat,
 And Rights by Wrongs are founded and sustain'd.

To-day,—this day, we are the fools of time;—
In thought, in love, in busy deed
We idly laugh or inly bleed,
And curse what yesterday we deem'd sublime.

What yesterday we did and deem'd sublime,
And walk'd the earth with port erect,
To-day, the very fools detect
As errant folly or as arrant crime!

Bring wine;—with radiant wine dry up the tears,
And let the blood flow freely on
To fill some other use when we are gone,—
The empty skull holds nor thoughts, loves, nor fears.

And painted imagery of woof and weft
Of passion, changing love and thought,
With changing phantasies o'er-wrought,
Perish by very change,—nor trace is left.

No trace is left, except the Law of Change
Which on the Past, the Future builds,
And with the slime of death still gilds
The varied change of Nature's mighty range.

Bring flow'rs to crown the skull ;—bring wine
To cheer the Heart and make it ring
With thoughts the living Brain shall bring,—
With thought and love, the moment make divine.

This much we catch, but may not, cannot keep
Succession of these lights and shades,—
Gloom that lights, light that quickly fades,
And in the gloom of all, life sinks to sleep.

V.

Earth,—Time, the great kaleidescope revolves,
And many pictur'd changes brings—
Shadows of many changing things,
And change,—Change is the only Truth it solves.

The infinite life is hurrying on,
And Space, the changing phantoms fill—
Changes of Thought, changes of Will,
With which to seek the Unchanging One.

The Unchanging One!—if such there be—
In mutability is lost,
And Self, by ev'ry tempest toss'd,
May find no rest upon the shoreless sea.

May find no rest upon this shoreless sea,
When ev'ry thing in change is lost,
And where this Self is tempest tost,
But would not rest, in sloth, eternally.

But would not rest,—but would not change,—yet be
A self-directed Power to act—
Self-creator of conscious fact,
And by conscious facts proclaim that he is free.

That he is free to do,—and free to dare,
And win some conscious prize of life,—
A conscious Love, tho' born of strife—
If strengthen'd by the struggle with Despair.

And strengthen'd by the struggle with Despair,
And worn and weary never quails,
And worn and weary never wails,
Looks to *his toil* and Hope is smiling there.*

* It is common to speak of the CURSE of Labor. We toil for what we hope, and always, in some way, for what we LOVE.

Hope, tried and firm,—not *she* of silken curls—
Holds steady helm,—o'er Fate prevails,—
Looks to the Star, and sets all sails
Into the sea which circles all the worlds.

VI.

And the *mystic life* of Work is all done,
By the *forces* of life in each,
As upward and onward we reach,
And the summit *by our own work* is won.

And the Summit by Thought and Work is won,
For there is high and there is low
In Mind, to which the Spirit *may* go,
To Darkness of depths, or Light as of sun.

To foulness of depths, or grandeur of height,
As truly and clearly his goal
Is the noblest summit of soul,
Where Love is all pure, and Knowledge all Light.

And Knowledge and Love are the Pow'rs of life,
Which to him, who wins, may belong;—
Baffled in Right, baffled by Wrong,
Onward and upward he moves thro' the strife.

He moves thro' the strife to the Life which is there,
And weary and worn, never wails,
And weary and worn, never quails,
His eye on the Light, his heel on Despair.

Bring cypress to crown the dead,—myrtle bring
For chaplets on the living brow ;
For all, for all is passing now,
And wail and anthem thro' the ages ring.

VII.

Mem'ries !—the sad mem'ries when hope is none,
And dead,—the dead forever dead,
And on the dust of life we tread,
And there's no goal of Love which may be won !

No love to woo the heart and win the mind !
Whence, how, and why, or mind or heart ;
Joy when we come, grief when depart,
Love for the lost, or those we leave behind ?

Mem'ry and Hope, like the full current's flow,
Make all the past and future one,—
Make life continuous life begun,
And on the future all the past bestow.

When pass the scenes of life, then others ope,
And newer forms of life appear,
Higher in each coming year,
With richer mem'ries and with richer hope;

As if thro' all a conscious, moving soul
The onward life of Thought diffus'd,
The onward life of Love suffus'd,—
Brought from the past—into the future roll.

And in the whole, all to one issue tend,—
Thought and Love, whence the whole began,
Completed in perfected man—
Reaching onward to fullness in the end.

End,—concordant means, through all changes, shine :
Though shadows mix with broken light,
The very shadows mould the sight,
And lights and shadows prove the Light divine.

The shadowy changes are but forms of light
On soft or darker shadows cast,—
And shadows passing, shadows past,
The pictures painted on the human sight.

And pictures come—they go,—they live,—they die
 As shadows cast their darkness o'er,—
 But ever and forevermore
 There beams o'er all an Omnipresent Eye.

Slight tact for touch,—slight *touch* for ev'ry sense,
 Slight touch upon the talking wire,
 Deep throbs which spring from each desire
 Bespeak an universal life—and whence.

'Pow'rs in Force, thro' all Nature's changes wind ;—*

They rul'd to *life* Earth's stormy deep,
 And order gave and order keep,—
 Memorial and prophecy of mind.

Thus Mind is there ;—and universal nerve,
 Whose touch to deepest, farthest space
 May reach, with slow or swiftest pace,
 Is there and everywhere that Mind to serve.

Within,—without the range of human sight,
 It moves an universal sense,—
 Moves and works in omnipresence,
 And Forms of Matter are fill'd with Shapes of Light.

* See note, Canto v. of Phon, on next page.

The Light, in Earth's billowing atoms nurs'd,
 And the first germs of nature fed,—
 Remoulds from ruins of the dead,
 And in the Last produces still the First.

"In all, 'tis Pow'r converted into Force,*
 And in DEMONSTRATE fact embodied forth,
 And in slow or swift mutations changing,
 All are but parts of the universal life.
 The sunbeams will destroy the Capitol
 And o'erturn the strong shaft on Bunker Hill ;
 And heat and cold grind granite into dust,
 From which the future flow'r shall spring ;
 And from this immortality of pow'r
 Men gather constant emblems of decay.
 No change without its correspondent force ;—
 Th' emotions, passions, thoughts, with iron pen
 Write th' ever-changing record of our race,
 In cave-temples, pyramids, monuments,
 Nations o'erthrown and states up-rising still,—
 Belting the earth with grandeur and decay."

[Phox., Canto v.]

* In Science the phaseology is the reverse. THERE it is Force converted into Power, namely, so much FORCE in a bushel of coal, in a state of ignition, acting upon water and converting it into steam, is equivalent to so many pounds of LIFTING POWER; the LATENT FORCE in the brain of man (or animal) acting on and through the muscles of the arm (in man) will lift so many pounds. We do not speak directly of the force of Spirit, although we do say FORCE OF MIND. Yet it is seen that SPIRITUAL, MENTAL POWERS must become ACTUAL FORCES to use and overcome Physical Forces, and so be converted into their express equivalents. It will, hereinafter, be seen that these are important distinctions, laden with new and strange results, demonstrative of Causative Mind. The distinction, in the instinctive rectitude of the human mind, has preserved a great fundamental truth and CONCEALED a no less fundamental and important truth.

Light, in crude nature, moulds the flow all—
 And *light* subserves the *Pow'rs* of mind ;—
 If Mind, unmade, we may not find,
 How break the Darkness of th' eternal pall ?—

The Darkness, when no Law nor Order was ;—
 No Law in Force to rule the deep—
 No Order, law to give or keep,
 And nothing was, or Nothing was as Cause.

If nothing was, whence all this moving Cause
 Of seried and successive flow ?
 If Cause moves all things here below,
 Whence Order—in its multitude of Laws ?

And *endless* Cause, which all the future moves,
 Is *immortality* of Pow'r ;—
 If Future has no fated hour,
 Its **PAST**, *eternal* as the future, proves.

If nothing was, then nothing yet may be,
 And all the phantom-worlds may pass,
 Like pictures mirror'd in the glass ;—
 But how the picture, how the glass *I see* ?

If pictures mirror'd in the glass *I see*,
 But endless changes do present,
 Their endless Cause they represent
 In moving order to this *thoughtful me*.

If in the Causes, as they onward trend,
 Wisdom and Love I trace or find,
 Then all the elements of mind
 Are there, and to that MIND my knees I bend.

MIND which, in multitude of *varied Laws*,
 O'er all, its *order* supervenes,
 In system moves the shifting scenes
 By Wisdom, Love and Pow'r,—is Primal Cause.

Then what is Mind?—Self-consciousness of Pow'r
 To mould and move in Forms of Thought,
 Thought or nature into action brought,
 For act and end of Love—Earth's noblest dow'r.

And Love must combat Wrong and suffer scath;—
 How else could Love *its nature* prove?
 How else can Wisdom *wed* with Love,
 And reach to HIM, thro' discords, but by Faith?

For Love *attracts*,—tho' knowledge vague and slight
May guide its wand'ring devious ways;—
Love *impels*,—aspires,—gathers rays
Of Thought, deeper Love, and Act—in trifold Light.

And trifold Light through Nature's shadows shine,
In wisdom form'd, by love inspir'd:—
In Wisdom and in Love attir'd
Creative Power proclaims itself divine.

And in the *causes*, as they onward roll,
Wisdom and Love and Pow'r I find,
And, as Nature's mirror'd to my mind,
This higher truth is mirror'd to my soul.

Earth to earth, ashes to ashes;—Nature gives
And takes and moves her means of life,
And all our days are change and strife,—
But 'tis by Truth and Love the Spirit lives;

Truth gather'd in each sad and flowing year,
Truth garner'd from the awful past,
And Love, like light on hill-tops cast,
To fill with glory all the rolling sphere.

VIII.

In nature, all things place and fitness find;
 Crude, fierce, wild, *lawless*, tho' they be—
 Each perfect in its sort we see,—
 Each perfect part reflects a perfect mind—

So far;—and all the parts in eddying whirls
 Of movement in their systems join'd—
 And systems into system *groin'd*,
 Is Thought, infinite, arching all the worlds.*

Man,—thinker, lover, actor,—systems finds,—
 Of Evil which to *evil* moves—
 Of Good which all *goodness* loves,—
 And in their strifes the work and test of minds.

'Tis Love of *evil*—and 'tis Love of *good*,
 And 'tis this Self which must decide,
 This deepmost, inner conflict guide
 In lone council of his own solitude.

* In vaulting or arching over from insulated points or piers, the cross-vaults or arches meet in ang'es and lead up to a common centre or apex. This is called GROINING." The stellar systems, each having its subordinate systems, and all the stellar systems dependent on a common centre or apex, present a universe groined, as it were, by the Infinite Thought.

And shall we think, and love and act in vain ?
 No;—by knowledge of the Right,
 By *pow'r* of Love, stronger than Might,
 Unite all Pow'rs in Love and summit gain.

This deepmost, inner Life shall rise to Light,
 With Pow'rs unfolded in the strife,
 Perfected in the Life of life,—
 And Evil sink in everlasting Night.

IX.

Each Self is free to do, and free to dare ;
 Self-director of conscious Act,
 Self-creator of conscious Fact,
 And by Thought, Love and Act, of all is Heir.

What if he toils and struggles with the Wrong,
 And Love and Hope and Knowledge gains,
 And thus his higher end attains ;—
Then Life is but the melody of song.

Then life is the full melody of song,
 Upon this brink of shoreless sea—
 The anthem, ton'd eternally,
 To Truth and Love which win the Right from Wron g.

That win the Right and leave no Wrong behind
 To stain the pathway of the past—
 To stain the love the Father cast
 O'er all his Works, from his omniscient Mind.

MIND, from *His* universal centre, sends
 Life in its glorious plentitude—
 Life, in flowing infinitude,
 Blending in Love—and in his glory blends.

X.

Life!—of its noblest heritage be Heir,—
 Face Wrong—the Right maintain,—nor let Despair
 Stain the rich Thought and Love thou hast;—
 Mem'ry and Hope, from out the Past,
 Like Light into the Morning cast—
 Like Morn which filled the *formless* Vast
 With Light and Shade for Time's immortal year,*
 Will weave the robes of glory Love shall wear.

* "And the earth was without form and void, and darkness dwelt on the face of the deep. And God said, Let there be Light. And the EVENING AND THE MORNING were the first day."





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